



ANNUAL REPORT

On the Health of the
Pebworth Rural District

IN THE
County of Gloucester,

For the Year 1920.

BY

D. GORDON EVANS, M.D. &c., D.P.H., Oxf.,

Medical Officer of Health.

EVESHAM :

75,16,4,21. H. W. Mayer, Printer, 58, Bridge Street, Evesham,

To the Pebworth Rural District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of submitting to you my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Administration of your District for the year 1920.

In response to the Circular 168 of the Ministry of Health, dated February, 1921, I am directed to compile the Annual Report for 1920 upon certain lines indicated in the Memorandum accompanying that Circular, as follows:—

(A) The Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

(a) Population at the Census of 1911 was 3,239, and the estimated population for 1920 was 3,086.

(b) Physical Features and General Character of the District.

The surface of the district is more or less of an undulating character. The Bredon Hills being situated on its north-western border, from whence the surface is somewhat flat as far as Aston Somerville, where it again rises. Subsequently it remains flat as far as the foot of the Cotswold Hills at Saintbury and Aston Subedge. There it reaches to a height of 754 feet above sea level. The surface is again quite flat in the Parish of Cow Honeybourne, continuing so right up to the Parish of Pebworth, where there is a slight rise. Unfortunately the district is partly intersected by that of the Evesham Rural District in two places, namely, by the Parish of Sedgeberrow in its western portion and by the Parish of Broadway near its middle part.

Causes of Death at all Ages for 1920

(Civilians only).

CAUSES OF DEATH.		Males	Females	Rate per 1,000 of Population
Totals from All Causes.		15	24	
1.	Enteric Fever			
2.	Smallpox			
3.	Measles			
4.	Scarlet Fever			
5.	Whooping Cough			
6.	Diphtheria and Croup			
7.	Influenza			
8.	Erysipelas			
9.	Pulmonary Tuberculosis			
10.	Tuberculous Meningitis			
11.	Other Tuberculous Diseases	1	1	0·6
12.	Cancer and Malignant Disease	1	2	0·9
13.	Rheumatic Fever			
14.	Meningitis			
15.	Organic Heart Disease	1	5	1·9
16.	Bronchitis		2	0·6
17.	Pneumonia			
18.	Other Respiratory Diseases		1	0·3
19.	Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)			
20.	Appendicitis and Typhilitis			
21.	Cirrosis of Liver			
21a.	Alcoholism			
22.	Nephritis and Bright's Disease	1		0·3
23.	Puerperal Fever			
24.	Parturition apart from above			
25.	Congenital Debility, &c....	1	1	0·6
26.	Violence apart from Suicide		1	0·3
27.	Suicide			
28.	Other Defined Causes	9	11	6·4
29.	Causes Ill-defined or Unknown	1		
	Death of Infants under 1 year of age...	1	3	
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year per 1,000 Births 47				



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The lower levels of the district have a subsoil composed of clay (lower lias), except the village of Childswickham, which rests on a bed of sand. But in the higher levels the subsoil is the upper lias, and still higher, we get the oolite. The public water supply to the villages of your District filter through the oolite as well as the supplies to the Evesham Rural and Urban Districts. All these strata are of the Jurassic Period.

(c) **Social Conditions.** The chief occupation of the inhabitants of the district is agricultural in character, with some fruit orchards and some market gardening here and there.

(d) **Vital Statistics.** The birth rate of the District for 1920 was 27·2, and it is therefore considerably higher than the birth rate for the whole of England and Wales, which stands at 25·4 per 1,000 of the population. The death rate was 12·5 per 1,000 of the inhabitants, whereas the corresponding rate for the whole of England and Wales was 12·4. A more concise view of the Vital Statistics of your District can be gathered by referring to the annexed Table. In the Table you will find that there have been no deaths at all during the year from any of the zymotic diseases. It is also very gratifying to find that there have been no deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, whereas in the adjoining Rural District of Evesham the death rate from this disease was as high as 1·2 per 1,000 of the population during 1919. The death rate from this cause for the combined Rural Districts of the County of Gloucester was 0·74.

The longevity of some of the inhabitants residing in your district is quite remarkable, as 47 per cent. of the deaths registered were 80 years of age and over.

(B) Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

(a) **Water Supply.** The villages of Pebworth, Cow Honeybourne, Aston Somerville and Hinton-on-the-Green obtain their Water Supply from the mains of the Evesham and Pebworth Villages Water Scheme. The sources of this supply is derived from springs situated on the Cotswold Hills, and is conveyed in cast-iron pipes from the sources to a couple of Collecting Chambers. During 1913 a considerable augmentation of this supply was effected by the addition of six springs situated in Lidcombe Wood in the parish of Stanway on a 99 years' lease from Lord Elcho. It was at this time that the second Collecting Chamber was constructed, and it is situated 800 feet above sea level. The six springs acquired yield half-a-million gallons per diem, half of which go to the Rural District of Winchcombe and the remaining half to augment the supply of the Evesham and Pebworth Villages Water Scheme. From these chambers the water is conveyed to the different villages enumerated above in cast-iron mains, and subsequently to the houses in the usual manner. The supply is more than sufficient, and is of excellent quality. The water has no plumbo-solvent action. Periodical samples are taken to test its purity from any contamination. The village of Ashton-under-Hill obtains its water supply from a spring on the hill above it. The storage is in a covered reservoir, and is being conveyed to the village in cast-iron pipes. It is pure, has no plumbo-solvent action, and the supply is sufficient except in very dry seasons.

The village of Aston Subedge derives its water supply by gravitation from springs situated on the Cotswold Hill above. The water is pure but somewhat hard, and there is a good and constant supply.

The village of Childswickham obtains its water supply from the Borough of Evesham Reservoirs situated on a considerably higher level. The supply is excellent and is now constant.

The village of Saintbury has water supplied from springs in the neighbourhood. It is carried by pipes to all the houses except two at Saintbury Grounds. The water is good, has no plumbo-solvent action, and the supply is sufficient.

The village of Weston Subedge is supplied with water from two springs situated 400 feet above it, and is conveyed to a storage reservoir, subsequently to stand pipes and houses in the village. The supply is pure and sufficient.

The village of Willersey has a spring water supply derived from the hill above. It is conveyed in glazed pipes to a covered reservoir. From this it is carried to the houses in iron pipes. The water has no plumbo-solvent action, is pure and quite sufficient.

(b) **Rivers and Streams.** There are no rivers or streams of any consequence within your District to be polluted.

(c) **Drainage and Sewerage.** An obsolete plan of draining the surface water by means of open ditches obtains in most of the villages. But acting on my former recommendations these open ditches are now gradually becoming converted into closed drains by the laying of 12-inch glazed pipes. This is a step in the right direction, because of the obnoxious effluvia emitting therefrom, especially during the summer months, which is a source of nuisance.

(d) **Closet Accommodation.** Generally speaking the privy accommodation is on the privy and ashpit plan throughout the District. The water carriage system of closet accommodation has been adopted in all the Public Elementary Schools. The sewage is conveyed into septic tanks with overflows either on the surface of the land, as in the case of Childswickham, or into the surface water drains as in the case of Cow Honeybourne. Several of the larger houses situated in the District have also adopted this method of closet conveniences. It is not possible to adopt the water carriage system for all the houses in the villages as there is no sewerage scheme in any of them. Besides it would be a very difficult matter to adopt any form of sewerage schemes for the villages, owing to there being no natural fall, except in the parishes of Ashton-under-Hill and Pebworth.

(e) **Scavenging.** Judging from the nature of your district, which is par excellence of a rural type, any organised method of scavenging on similar lines to those adopted in the towns is at present unnecessary. The refuse from the houses and that of the privies and ashpits is removed on to the land by the inhabitants themselves. The still existing surface water ditches are periodically cleansed by the Council's workmen as necessity arises.

(f) **Sanitary Inspection of the District.** The number of premises visited by your Sanitary Inspector during the year were 11 Workshops, 20 Residences of Out-workers, *i.e.*, Gloveresses, 5 Bakehouses, 2 Slaughter-houses, and 20 Cowsheds and Dairies. No defects or nuisances were discovered in connection with these premises, except as regards to 5 instances of the cowsheds, which required to be lime washed. Your Sanitary Inspector also inspected 40 Houses, and found defects in 30 of them, for which it was necessary to serve notices of a remedial nature. The total number of informal notices served during the year were 10, but no statutory notices were required to be served at all.

(g) **Schools.** The sanitary conditions of the Public Elementary Schools situated within your District is quite satisfactory. In all the schools the water carriage system of closet accommodation is in vogue. The water supply to all of them being obtained from the various village supplies, which are pure and quite free from any plumbosolvent properties.

In some of my former Annual Reports, I have pointed out at length the vital importance of having all school class-rooms properly ventilated. The best method of achieving this end is to have windows made to open from the top to the bottom, so that every class-room can be thoroughly flushed with pure fresh air from the outside during the out-of-school hours of the children. It is not possible to rid a room of all the stagnant and foul air by means of a hopper sash or ventilating radiators alone without the above adjunct. Impure air causes all manner of illhealth. Tuberculosis in all its deadly forms is immensely aggravated by breathing air deficient in oxygen. Adenoids, enlarged Tonsils, Anæmia, Decayed Teeth, etc., are also caused by bad air, and children who are quite free from these complaints before their compulsory school days are constantly seen to develop them afterwards. The statistics of school inspections prove the frequency of these affections amongst the school children attending our Public Elementary Schools. The elaborate and costly buildings with closed in classrooms are quite unnecessary to educate the young. A much more healthy and hygienic construction would be a light building made to open entirely, and to shut at will on its southern aspect. During the cold weather this could be effectually warmed with hot water pipes. Another serious point affecting the health of young children at present is the ever-increasing tendency of the school authorities to place too much brain pressure on them, disregarding the Latin phrase, *mens sana in corpore sano*. The present-day fallacy is the spending of too much money on the brain work of young children at the expense of their stomachs. If we are in future to convert a C 3 nation to one of Class A this can only be attained by improving the nutrition of the body instead of the excessive amount of brain work. The whole community cannot be brain workers, there must also be some physical workers as well to make up a nation. Besides a well-fed child has more resistive powers to the infectious diseases than a poorly-fed brain pressed one possesses. None of your Public Elementary Schools were closed owing to the prevalence of infections during the year.

(C). Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

(a) **Infectious Diseases Generally.** I am pleased to state that your District was comparatively free from the Notifiable Infectious

Diseases during the year. Only 2 cases of Erysipelas and 5 of Scarlet Fever were reported for the whole period. The Scarlet Fever cases were removed to the sanatorium, and the houses were disinfected with Formalin. The usual procedure, as you are aware, for the District when notifications of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria have been received by the Sanitary Inspector is to cause them to be immediately removed to the Infectious Joint Hospital, Evesham. After removal the house is well disinfected with Formalin, either by spraying or fumigation with Formalin vapour. The Sanitary Inspector invariably supervises the disinfections. In the diphtheria cases you have already authorised the free supply of anti-toxin for them. Bacteriological aids to the diagnosis of these cases has been arranged with the Public Health Department of the Bristol University for the cultivation and microscopical examination of the swabs taken from the cases. The same University undertakes bacteriological investigations of the material submitted for T.B., and also from Venereal cases within your District.

(b) **Tuberculosis.** Patients suffering from any form of Tuberculosis are dealt with by the officers of the County Council.

(D) Food.

(a) **Milk Supply.** The quality and wholesomeness of the milk produced within your District is so well known that it receives a ready sale outside the District, and is even sent by rail to Birmingham and other places.

(b) **Meat.** There are only 2 Registered Slaughter-houses within your District. These existed in 1914, and also in January and December 1920. These have been regularly inspected and found to be in a satisfactory condition. No carcasses, or the parts of carcasses, were condemned for tuberculosis. But some 119lbs. of imported mutton was condemned as being unfit for human consumption.

(E) Housing.

The general housing conditions of your district can now be considered to be quite good. There are only a very few houses in so dilapidated a condition as to be considered unfit for habitation, and most of these are quite capable of being remedied. It is in the hamlet of Murcot that the worst conditions exist. But here the Murcot Co-operative Housing Society contemplate building 16 new houses, which, when completed, will meet all the requirements of the inhabitants. When all the houses referred to in my last Annual Report, which are being erected under the Government Scheme, are completed, there can be no scarcity of workmen's dwellings within your District for some years to come.

The Memorandum Appendix.

HOUSING CONDITIONS.

STATISTICS.

Year ended 31st December, 1920.

1.—GENERAL.

Estimated population	...	...	...	3,086
General death-rate	...	...	...	12·5
Death-rate from tuberculosis	...	...	...	0·6
Infantile mortality	...	...	...47 per 1,000 births	
Number of dwelling-houses of all classes	...	...	...	847
Number of new working-class houses erected	...	...	...	26

2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.

I.—Inspection.

Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	40
Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	...	...	...	Nil
Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	Nil
Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	Nil

II.—Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	30
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III.—Action under Statutory Powers	Nil
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3.—UNHEALTHY AREAS.	Nil
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The Annual Report of your Sanitary Inspector (Mr. R. J. Atkinson) is herewith annexed.

In accordance with the requirements of the Circular mentioned at the beginning of this Report, six copies will be forwarded to the Secretary Ministry of Health, and one copy to the Under Secretary of State, Home Office.

I am your obedient Servant,

D. GORDON EVANS, M.D., D.P.H., OXF.

April 25th, 1921.

To the Pebworth Rural District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting my report for the year ended December 31st, 1920:—

Nuisances.

I have again to report that it was difficult to secure the abatement of nuisances owing to the labour problem. . Some of your villages are isolated, and the builders who usually execute repairs in these villages were engaged on new housing schemes.

The usual table containing particulars of work accomplished in your sanitary department is appended.

Drainage and Sewerage.

No works of any moment were carried out.

The question of extending the sewer at Ashton-under-Hill was considered, and it was decided to lay approximately 200 yards of 6in. sewer to receive the drainage from several houses in one particular portion of the village. This work is now in hand, and, when completed, will abate what has been a serious nuisance for some considerable time.

A length of sewer ditch was cleaned out in the same township during the year.

It will be necessary at an early date to consider dealing with the drainage at the Council Cottages at Cow Honeybourne, and I have in mind a simple and inexpensive scheme for dealing with this, which I will put before you as soon as I have taken levels,

Water Supply.

Numerous complaints were received during the early portion of the year respecting the inadequate supply of water to Childswickham. This was due to your not receiving the requisite quantity of water into the reservoir from the Evesham Corporation reservoir. After the attention of the latter Authority was drawn to the matter there has been an abundant supply, and the reservoir has been kept full since.

The question of extending the water main to supply the new houses now in course of erection at Murcot was gone into, but not having come to terms with the owners and the Ministry of Health this matter is still in abeyance.

It was found necessary to extend the water main at Willersey to supply the new housing scheme. This entailed the laying of approximately 200 lin. yards of 2in. water main.

Several improvements were effected in connection with the water supply at Weston-sub-edge such as the fixing of new cast-iron covers to the tanks to prevent access of surface water.

Slaughter Houses.

Inspections were made of the slaughter houses, which were found clean.

119lbs. of imported mutton was condemned as being unfit for human consumption.

No new licences were issued during the year.

Factories and Workshops.

There is nothing special to report under this head. There are no factories in the area, but not a few of the inhabitants are engaged as out-workers in the glove-making industry. These premises were inspected from time to time, as were also the bakehouses, which were found satisfactory. No reports as to insanitary conditions were received from H.M. Factory Inspector.

Housing.

No action was taken as regards dealing with houses unfit for habitation, as you took what in my opinion is a wise view of proceeding as expeditiously as possible with the new housing schemes before dealing with existing dwelling houses. It is of little use closing houses until there are others for the people to go into. And with regard to repairs to existing houses very little was accomplished, for it was necessary to withdraw labour from the new housing schemes to do these.

As stated in my last report with reference to state-aided housing schemes your programme was as follows :—

Willersey	...	...	...	12	houses
Childswickham	...	...	...	6	„
Cow Honeybourne	...	...	...	8	„
Pebworth	...	...	...	10	„

The Willersey scheme was completed, and all the houses occupied by the end of the year.

The Childswickham and Cow Honeybourne schemes are completed at the date of writing this report (April), so that having regard to the labour problem and the isolated position of these villages it is very satisfactory to have completed these schemes.

I regret to report that building operations have not yet commenced at Pebworth owing to circumstances of which you are aware, and which I need not enlarge upon here. But I hope a commencement will be made in the near future, because if the scheme is not completed by July, 1922, there is a danger of losing the Government grant.

The Murcot Co-operative Housing Society proceeded with their scheme of 16 houses at Murcot, but only two are verging on to completion. These cannot be occupied when they are completed until a satisfactory water supply is obtained.

Only one house was built by private enterprise. This was at Ashton-under-Hill.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

In five instances it was necessary to draw the attention of the farmers to the fact that lime-washing of the cowsheds was necessary. It was hoped to revise the registers during the year, but owing to pressure of other work this was found impossible.

I take this opportunity of thanking the Council for your co-operation and support, and your Clerk for his valuable assistance.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

REGINALD J. ATKINSON, .

Sanitary Inspector.

Tabular Summary of Sanitary Inspector's Work for the Year ending December 31st, 1920.

1—Housing.	Housing, Town, &c., Planning Act Regulations, 1910.	2. Water Supply.	3. Sewage and Drainage.	4—Numbers Inspected of each of the following.	5.—General.	6. Infectious Diseases.
(a)	Number of Plans for New Houses approved ...					1
(b)	Number of Houses built ...					27
(c)	Number of Houses for which Water Certificates were granted ...					—
(d)	Approximate Number of Houses in the District ...					847
(1)	Number of Houses Inspected ...					40
(2)	Number of Houses with Defects for which Notices were necessary ...					30
(3)	Number of Houses for which Notices were served Under other Sections of Public Health Act ...					— | Remedied —
(4)	Number of Houses Unfit for Habitation ...					— | Made Habitable —
(5)	Number of Closing Orders ...					— | Houses Affected —
(6)	Number of Demolition Orders ...					— | —
(e)	Number of Cases of Overcrowding reported ...					— | Number Abated —
(f)	Number of Houses Cleansed on Notices ...					— | —
	Number of New Connections with Public Supply					26
	Number of Wells Sunk, or Improved Sources of Supply Provided ...					—
	Drains Laid or Relain ...					29
	Cleansed, Trapped or Ventilated ...					20
	Number of W.C.'s newly supplied with Flushing Cisterns ...					1
	Number of Water Closets, Earth Closets, Pail Closets or Improved Privies Constructed ...					1
	Number of Privies Repaired, &c. ...					1
	Slaughter Houses ...			No. on Reg.	No Inspected	2 | 2
	Bakehouses ...			5	5	5 | 5
	Dairies, Cowsheds, Milkshops ...			20	20	20 | 20
	Workshops ...			11	11	11 | 11
	Residences of Out-workers ...			43	20	43 | 20
(a)	Total Number of Inspections made ...					— 70
	Nuisances reported ...					5
	Swine ...					—
(b)	Total Number of Nuisances abated ...					40
(c)	Total Number of Preliminary Notices served and Letters written ...					10
(d)	Total Number of Statutory Notices served ...					—
(e)	Total Number of Summonses taken out ...					—
(f)	Total Number of Convictions ...					—
(g)	Total Number of Letters received ...					—
(a)	Number of Cases Visited and reported on ...					4
(b)	Number of Houses in which cases occurred ...					3
(c)	Number of Houses Disinfected ...					3
(d)	Methods of Disinfection used ...					Formalin, Vapour and Spraying.

(Signed) **REGINALD J. ATKINSON,**

Cert. R, San. Inst.

